



YEAST BREAD

Basics

AN EASY YEAST BREAD
TUTORIAL AND SIMPLE
RECIPES FOR THE BEGINNER

by Julie Brown

Dogwoods & Dandelions

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WHY MAKE YOUR OWN BREAD?

I realize many people are intimidated by the thought of making your own bread. However, I really don't think it is as difficult or as time-consuming as one might think. Several of these bread recipes take less hands-on time than it would take to drive to the store and pick up some rolls.

If you are just starting out making yeast bread, I recommend you start with either the Cowboy Rolls or One-Hour Yeast Rolls. Both are very forgiving and can be made from start to finish in about an hour. The Cowboy Rolls even have a bit of baking powder to help with the rise.

Not only does homemade bread taste better, but it is also much less expensive than store-bought. With grocery prices on the rise, I've noticed the price of bread has gone up as well. But with a bag of flour and a few other ingredients (that you probably already have) you can make fresh homemade breads anytime you like.

And you will also know what is in the bread you are making. Many loaves of bread and rolls from the store include high fructose syrup as well as preservatives and other questionable ingredients most of us would rather not feed our families.

You'll find recipes for Easy Cheesy Hamburger Buns, (They make great sandwich rolls too!) White Sandwich Bread, Focaccia, and even Cinnamon rolls.

Most of the recipes are easy so they are perfect for the beginning baker. All of these are recipes we regularly eat in our home. I am not a "fancy" bread baker as I'm sure you can tell by the pictures!

Most of these breads are rustic in nature because I'm in a hurry to get them on the table. But I do believe in enjoying meals with family and friends around the table and a loaf of homemade bread or some fresh rolls can help with that!

SUPPLIES YOU NEED

You really don't need many supplies to bake homemade bread. While a stand mixer is nice, all of these recipes can be made by hand in a large bowl with a sturdy spatula. A few other things I recommend include:

- whisk
- bench knife
- parchment paper
- baking pans - loaf pans (4/12" x 8 1/2"), a 9" x 13" baking pan, a 13" x 18" sheet pan, a cast iron skillet, pizza pans or pizza stone

INGREDIENTS YOU NEED

Many of the ingredients you need to make bread are probably already in your pantry. Anything you don't have can easily be found at your local grocery store or ordered online.

- flour-all of these recipes use all-purpose flour
- yeast
- butter
- milk
- baking powder
- baking soda
- a neutral-flavored oil
- sugar
- salt

HOW TO WORK WITH YEAST

Choosing the Type of Yeast

Active Dry vs. Instant Yeast vs. Rapid Rise

Active dry yeast is usually the most common type sold in grocery stores. It comes in packets or glass jars and has a consistency similar to cornmeal.

Instant yeast is usually milled into finer particles than active dry yeast. Because of the smaller particles it dissolves and activates a bit faster.

I like to buy yeast in bulk. It is usually much cheaper than the individual packets. If you don't bake yeast breads often, the yeast can be stored in the freezer.

I only use instant yeast in my kitchen simply because that is what I can easily find in bulk. That is what these recipes are written using.

However, if you have active dry, you can still follow these recipes exactly as written. The only change you may need to make is to allow another 15 minutes or so rise time as it takes a bit longer for the yeast to activate. You don't need to "proof" the yeast (mix the yeast with a bit of warm water first) unless you so desire. However, if the yeast is older, I do recommend mixing the yeast with a bit of the warm water called for in the recipe and a pinch of sugar to be sure the yeast is still active. If it is active, it should be bubbly after about 5 minutes.

As you get more familiar with working with yeast doughs you will be able to quickly tell when a dough has doubled in size so the type of yeast you use won't really matter. I've made most of these doughs with both kinds and it hasn't made much difference in the final bread.

The one type of yeast you want to avoid for these recipes is rapid rise yeast. This yeast is for doughs that only need one rise and usually recipes are specifically written for this type of yeast.

When a recipe calls for warm water, the water temperature should be about 110 degrees. If you don't have a thermometer, the water should just barely feel warm if you stick your finger in it. Err on the side of too cool. Water that is too hot will kill the yeast. If the water is too cold, the dough may take longer to rise but it will still work. Many of these recipes do call for warm water since many of them are quick-rising recipes.

How to Knead Bread Dough by Hand

If you don't have a stand mixer, these recipes can be made in a large bowl. Combine the ingredients as listed and mix well with a wooden spoon. When you have a cohesive dough, turn the dough out onto a greased or floured surface and knead by hand for the time indicated.

To knead bread dough by hand, turn the dough out onto a floured or greased surface. I find that using a greased surface can be easier for beginners as they aren't tempted to add too much flour to keep the dough from sticking.

Pat the dough into a circle and fold the dough over on itself. Rotate the dough 1/4 of a turn and using the heel of your hand, press the dough onto itself. Fold the dough over on itself again and rotate another quarter of a turn. Keep doing this for the time indicated in the recipe or until you have a smooth, cohesive dough. Kneading for long enough is important as this motion is what develops the gluten in the bread that gives the bread its structure.

If the dough is still not smooth, you may need to knead for a few more minutes. Sometimes hand-kneading does take a bit longer.

You may have to re-flour or re-grease your surface occasionally. If after kneading for a few minutes your dough doesn't hold its shape, you may have to add a bit more flour. Just don't overdo it or your bread may be dense and dry. With practice, you will be able to tell when the dough is the right consistency. However, these recipes are pretty forgiving so a bit much flour or too little will still probably turn out great bread.

THE RECIPES

- One-Hour Yeast Rolls
- One-Hour Garlic Butter Yeast Rolls
- Cowboy Rolls
- Quick Focaccia
- Easy Cheesy Hamburger Buns
- Cinnamon Rolls
- French Bread
- Quick & Easy Pizza Dough
- White Sandwich Bread
- Easy Flatbread
- Spreads

One Hour Yeast Rolls



Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups milk, warmed
- 1 Tablespoon yeast
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 2 Tablespoons butter, softened or melted
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 Tablespoons butter, melted

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, add the warmed milk, yeast, and sugar. Mix on low speed until combined. Let rest 5 minutes. At the end of the 5 minutes, the mixture should be foamy.
2. Add the 2 Tablespoons softened or melted butter, salt, and 3 cups flour. Mix on low speed until well combined. Continue mixing, adding 1/4 cup flour at a time (up to 1 additional cup) until the dough starts to pull away from the sides of the bowl. Err on the side of not adding enough flour vs. adding too much. Knead with the mixer for 3-5 minutes.
3. Cover the dough (I use a flour sack towel) and let rise for 15 minutes.
4. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease a 9" x 13" pan or line it with parchment paper. Scrape dough from the bowl onto a well-floured surface. The dough will be soft. Divide the dough into 20 pieces and gently roll each piece into a ball. (They don't have to be perfect!)

5. Transfer each ball of dough to the prepared pan. They will usually touch, but it's ok if they don't. Brush with the 3 Tablespoons melted butter.

6. Let rolls rise for another 15 minutes. They will rise even more in the oven. Bake for 15 minutes or until browned to your liking. Try not to eat the whole pan in one sitting!



One Hour Garlic Butter Yeast Rolls

Yes, these rolls can be made in one hour. Friends and family won't believe how yummy these rolls taste either. I've given out this recipe many times and everyone is amazed at how easy they are. This is the perfect recipe for potlucks and Italian meals but my family could eat these everyday.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups milk, warmed
- 1 Tablespoon yeast
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 2 Tablespoons butter, softened or melted
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 Tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder, divided
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley, optional
- 1/4 teaspoon salt



Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, add the warmed milk, yeast, and sugar. Mix on low speed until combined. Let rest for 5 minutes. At the end of the 5 minutes, the mixture should be foamy.
2. Add the 2 Tablespoons softened or melted butter, salt, 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, and 3 cups flour. Mix on low speed until well combined. Continue mixing, adding 1/4 cup flour at a time (up to 1 additional cup) until the dough starts to pull away from the sides of the bowl. Err on the side of not adding enough flour vs. adding too much. Knead with the mixer for 3-5 minutes.

3. Cover the dough (I use a flour sack towel) and let rise for 15 minutes.
4. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease a 9" x 13" pan or line it with parchment paper. Scrape dough from the bowl onto a well-floured surface. The dough will be soft. Divide the dough into 20 pieces and gently roll each piece into a ball.
5. Transfer each ball of dough to the prepared pan. They will usually touch, but it's ok if they don't. Mix melted butter with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder and parsley. Brush mixture on rolls. Sprinkle with additional salt.
6. Let rolls rise for another 15 minutes. They will rise even more in the oven. Bake for 15 minutes or until browned to your liking.



Cowboy Rolls

These are one of the easiest rolls you can make and are perfect for the beginning bread maker. They are a cross between a biscuit and a roll. These rolls contain baking powder, baking soda, and yeast so they are almost guaranteed to rise.

If you don't have buttermilk on hand, you can use the powdered buttermilk (adding the water needed) or a combination of yogurt or sour cream and regular milk to approximate the consistency of buttermilk.

The dough can be made ahead and stored in the refrigerator for up to a week making fresh rolls possible even on a weeknight.

I have also turned this dough into cinnamon rolls when I've been in a hurry and no one in my family has ever complained.



Ingredients:

- 4 1/2 teaspoons yeast
- 1 cup warm water
- 7 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 1/2 cup neutral-flavored oil

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle (or by hand) dissolve the yeast in the warm water.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix until blended. You don't need to knead the dough. It will be very soft.
3. For best results, allow the dough to rest for 30 minutes. If I'm in a hurry I don't, but they will have a better flavor and texture if you can.
4. If you want to refrigerate the dough for later do so now. Otherwise, roll dough out 3/4" thick onto a floured surface and cut with a biscuit cutter. You can use whatever size cutter you would like. This recipe is very forgiving. If you don't want to use all the dough right now, refrigerate the rest in a covered container.
5. Place rolls on a baking sheet and bake at 375 degrees for 10-12 minutes, depending on the size of the rolls.

Leftover dough stores well in the refrigerator for up to 1 week and will begin to take on a slight sourdough flavor after several days.



Quick Focaccia

Ingredients:

Dough

- 3/4 cup warm water
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoon yeast
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt



Topping

- 3 Tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 Tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- fresh herbs, optional

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, add the sugar, water and yeast. Stir briefly and allow to rest 5 minutes.
2. Add 1 cup flour and the salt and stir to mix. Add olive oil and mix again. Gradually add the remaining flour (You may not need it all.) until a smooth dough forms and starts to pull away from the sides of the mixing bowl.
3. Preheat the oven to 225 degrees. When the oven comes to temperature, turn it off.
4. Grease a cast iron skillet. I use a 10" skillet but a larger skillet will make thinner focaccia. If you don't have a cast iron skillet you can divide the dough between 2 cake pans or pie plates.
5. Roll the dough on a greased or floured surface to approximately the size of your skillet or pan.

6. Place dough in the skillet and press to the edges. If you prefer a lip on your focaccia, you can press the dough up the sides a bit.
7. Cover the dough with a kitchen towel, place in the warm oven, allow to rise for 20 minutes.
8. Remove the skillet from the oven. Be careful, it may be hot. Turn the oven to 400 degrees.
9. Using your fingers, make intentions in the dough. Mix topping ingredients. Brush half over the dough.
10. When the oven get to temperature, bake focaccia for 20 minutes or until golden. Remove from the oven, top with any fresh herbs, slice and serve.



Easy Cheesy Hamburger Buns

These easy cheesy hamburger buns will take your hamburger to a whole new level. The buns can be made ahead and frozen. This recipe also makes great sandwich rolls. While the onion powder is optional, it adds great flavor to the rolls.



Ingredients:

- 2 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup grated cheddar or Parmesan cheese, optional
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon onion powder, optional
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- 2 1/2 teaspoons yeast
- 4 Tablespoons butter, softened
- 1 egg
- 2/3 to 3/4 cup warm water

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle, add all ingredients. Mix on low speed until combined. Turn the mixer to medium and beat for 2 minutes. The dough will be sticky.
2. Cover the dough and allow it to rise for 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
3. Remove the dough from the bowl to a floured cutting board. Divide into 8 pieces for regular hamburger buns, 6 pieces for large buns, or 12 pieces for slider rolls.
4. Shape the dough into balls and place them on a greased or parchment-lined baking sheet. Gently press on the tops of the buns to flatten them with your hands.
5. Cover the buns and let them rise again for about an hour. Near the end of the rising time, preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
6. Bake the buns for about 15-20 minutes or until the buns are a light golden brown.

These can easily be made ahead and toasted later. They also freeze well.

Cinnamon Rolls

Ingredients:

Dough

- 3/4 cup milk, warmed
- 2 Tablespoons butter, softened
- 1 egg
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons yeast

Cinnamon Roll Filling

- 2 Tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 Tablespoon cinnamon

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, add the dough ingredients. Mix on low speed until combined. Knead in the mixer for 5 minutes.
2. Allow dough to rise for 1 to 1 1/2 hours until almost doubled in size.
3. Punch dough down. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface. Roll or pat dough into a 12" x 8" rectangle. Brush with 2 Tablespoons melted butter.
4. Combine cinnamon and sugar. Sprinkle over dough. Roll up, jelly-roll fashion beginning on the long side. You should have a 12" log. Cut into 12 slices.
5. Place the slices in a greased 9" x 13" pan. Cover and allow to rise for 30-45 minutes or until puffy. Near the end of the rise time, preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
6. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown.

For the glaze:

Combine glaze ingredients. Drizzle over warm rolls.



Glaze:

- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1-2 Tablespoons milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

French Bread



Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups warm water
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 1 Tablespoon yeast
- 2 1/4 salt
- 2 Tablespoons olive or avocado oil
- 5 1/2 - 6 cups all-purpose flour

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, combine water, sugar, and yeast. Mix on low speed until combined. Add the salt, oil, and 3 cups flour. Mix until combined.
2. Gradually add in the remaining 2 1/2 to 3 cups flour. The dough should be slightly tacky. Knead for 2-3 minutes until smooth. If the dough starts sticking to the side of the mixer add a little more flour (2 Tablespoons at a time) until a soft dough forms.
3. Remove the dough hook. Cover. Allow dough to rise for 60 minutes or until doubled in size.
4. Turn the dough out onto a lightly greased surface. Divide into 2 pieces. Shape each piece into a log, approximately 12-14 inches long. The easiest way to do this is to pat into a 9 x 13" rectangle and roll up, pressing out any air bubbles. Pinch the seams to seal.
5. Place loaves on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Using a sharp knife, slash each loaf 3 -5 times across the top. This helps prevent the loaf from cracking in unexpected places.

6. Cover with a kitchen towel and allow to rise again until nearly doubled. Near the end of the rise time preheat the oven to 375 degrees with the oven rack in the center of the oven.
7. Bake the loaves for 25-30 minutes until golden.



Quick & Easy Pizza Dough

This easy pizza dough is amazing. My family has used this recipe for years. I double it to make 2 large pizzas to feed my hungry boys. The recipe as written will make 1 large or 2 medium pizzas.

If you like to add a lot of toppings to your pizza, I recommend baking the pizza crust for about 8 minutes first. Then top with your pizza toppings and bake



Ingredients:

- 1 cup warm water
- 1 Tablespoon honey
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon yeast
- 2 1/2 - 3 cups all-purpose or bread flour
- cornmeal for sprinkling, optional

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, combine warm water, honey, olive oil, salt, and yeast. Add 2 cups of flour and mix. Gradually add up to another cup of flour until you have a soft, smooth dough. The dough should be slightly tacky, but not stiff or sticky.
2. Knead the dough for 2-3 minutes.
3. Cover the dough and allow it to rest for at least minutes, but you can also let it sit for up to 2 hours. Or refrigerate in a covered container for up to 2 days.

4. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. If you have a pizza stone, place it in the oven to heat. Punch the dough down and roll out the dough into the desired size. Roll larger for a thin-crust pizza(s) or smaller for a thick-crust pizza(s). I like to roll the dough on parchment paper sprinkled with cornmeal.
5. If you add a lot of toppings, it works better to par-bake the crust for 8-10 minutes before topping the pizza. This ensures the center gets fully cooked. You can bake the pizza on a pan or place the parchment paper with the crust directly on the hot pizza stone.
6. Once the crust is partially baked, remove it from the oven, top it with your desired toppings, and return it to the oven to bake for 10-15 minutes longer.



White Sandwich Bread



Ingredients:

- 2 cups milk, warmed
- 3 Tablespoons sugar
- 4 teaspoons yeast
- 3 Tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 5 - 6 cups all-purpose flour

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, add the warmed milk, sugar, and yeast. Mix on low speed until combined.
2. Add the melted butter, salt, and 5 cups of flour. Mix on low speed until well combined. Continue mixing, adding 1/4 cup flour at a time (up to 1 additional cup) until the dough starts to pull away from the sides of the bowl. Err on the side of not adding enough flour vs. adding too much. Knead with the mixer for 3-5 minutes.
3. Remove the dough hook, cover the dough with a towel or plastic wrap, and let it rise for about an hour or until doubled in size.
4. Punch the dough down. Divide into two pieces on a floured or greased surface. Shape each piece into a log that will fit into an 8 1/2" x 4 1/2" bread pan. Place each piece in a greased loaf pan.
5. Cover the dough and allow it to rise for another hour or until it reaches the top of the pan. Just before it is finished rising, preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

6. Bake the loaves for 20-25 minutes until golden brown on top and the loaf sounds hollow when tapped.

7. Immediately turn the loaves out onto a cooling rack. For the best texture, allow the loaves to cool completely before slicing. This will also help the bread stay fresher longer. Store in a plastic bag for 2 to 3 days on the counter or freeze for longer storage.



Easy Flatbreads

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup warm water
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups plus 2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 1/2 teaspoons yeast
- 1 teaspoon baking powder



Directions:

1. Combine 2 cups flour and the remaining ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer using the paddle. Mix on medium speed for 25 seconds. Scrape the bowl and mix for another 20 seconds.
2. Sprinkle your work surface with a small amount of the flour from the remaining 2 Tablespoons. Turn dough onto the floured area and knead for 2-3 minutes, incorporating the remaining flour as needed. The dough should just be slightly tacky.
3. Leaving the dough on the work surface, cover with the mixing bowl and allow to rest for 30 minutes.
4. After the 30 minutes are up, divide the dough into 8 pieces. Form each into a ball and allow to rest for 5 minutes.

5. While the dough is resting, preheat a large skillet on the stovetop or preheat an electric griddle to 325 degrees.
6. Roll each piece of dough into a circle approximately 6" wide and 1/4" thick. You may need to use a bit more flour if they start to stick.
7. Once the skillet or griddle is hot, dry-fry the flatbreads. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes on one side, flip the flatbread, and cook for about 2 minutes on the other side. You will get faster the more you make them.
8. As you cook the flatbread, remove them to a wire rack to cool slightly. Flatbreads can be stored at room temperature in a plastic bag for 4 days or freeze the flatbreads for longer storage.

Spreads

Sometimes you just need a little something to add to your bread recipes. These spreads are some of my family's favorites and are wonderful to add to a basket if you are making bread to give as a gift.



Herb Butter

- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 2 Tablespoons any herb or combination of herbs, chopped
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice

Mix softened butter, herbs, and lemon juice with a fork in a small bowl. Spoon herb butter into a container if using within 2 weeks or place the herb butter on a sheet of waxed paper or plastic wrap, shaping it into a log. Twist the ends of the wrap to seal. Store in the freezer.

Honey Butter

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 3/4 tsp. cinnamon

Beat all ingredients together in a mixer. Store in the refrigerator until ready to use.





Orange Honey Butter

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3 Tablespoons honey
- 1 Tablespoon orange zest
- 1 Tablespoon orange juice concentrate
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar

Beat all ingredients together in a mixer. Store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Quick Refrigerator Jam

- 1 bag (12 oz.) frozen fruit* (see flavor options on the right)
- 1 1/2 tsp. lemon or lime zest
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 T. cold water

Combine fruit, zest, sugar, and 1/4 cup water in a medium saucepan. Cook over medium-high heat until bubbles start to form and mixture thickens a bit. In a bowl, stir cornstarch into 1 T. cold water. Stir into fruit mixture. Bring to a boil and boil for 1 minute, stirring continuously. Cool. Mixture will thicken even more while cooling. Pack into 4 oz. Mason jars. Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks. Makes 2 to 3 jars.



*Flavor options:

- Cherry-lime: Use a bag of cherries and lime zest
- Blueberry-lemon: Use 12 oz. blueberries and lemon zest
- Peach-lemon: Use a bag of peaches and lemon zest
- Strawberry-lemon: Use 12 oz. strawberries and lemon zest

*Chop fruit in a food processor if you don't want large chunks in your jam. I have made this many times with many different fruits and it has always turned out great.

About Julie B.

Hey there! I'm Julie B. I want to help you learn to be a bit more self-sufficient, no matter where you live.

From growing your own food to DIY projects for yourself or others, I'm here to help you learn a few new skills. I'll show you how to raise chickens in your backyard or grow a small container garden.

Even if you live in the city, you can grow a few herbs or make your own lip balm. Let's cultivate a good life...wherever we live.

Stay in the loop by [**signing up for my newsletter**](#) where I share the latest blog posts and other useful tips. You'll also get access to my Resource Library full of free printables.



For more information on raising chickens, growing a small garden, or finishing simple diy projects follow me on the social media channels listed below!



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